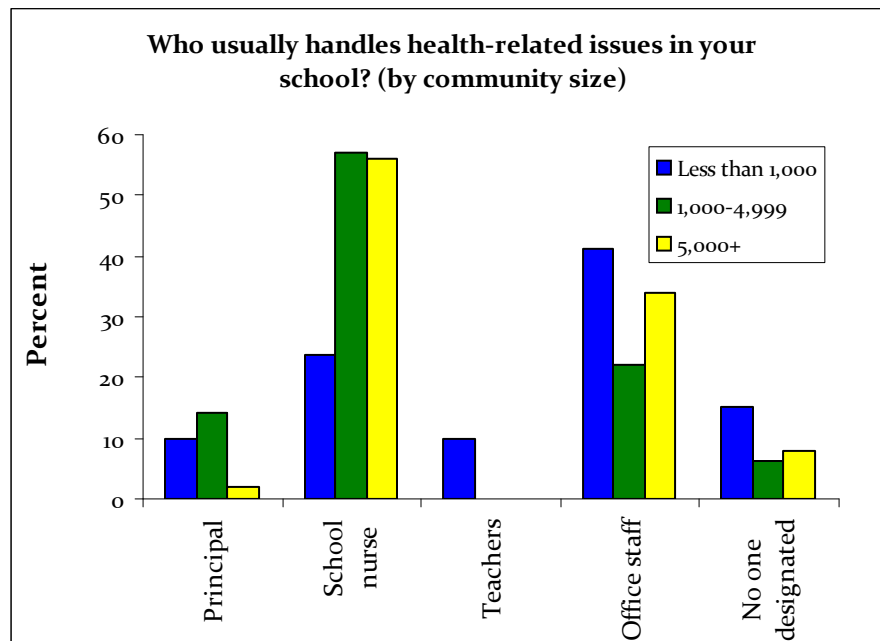




Montana School Administrators' Survey Results



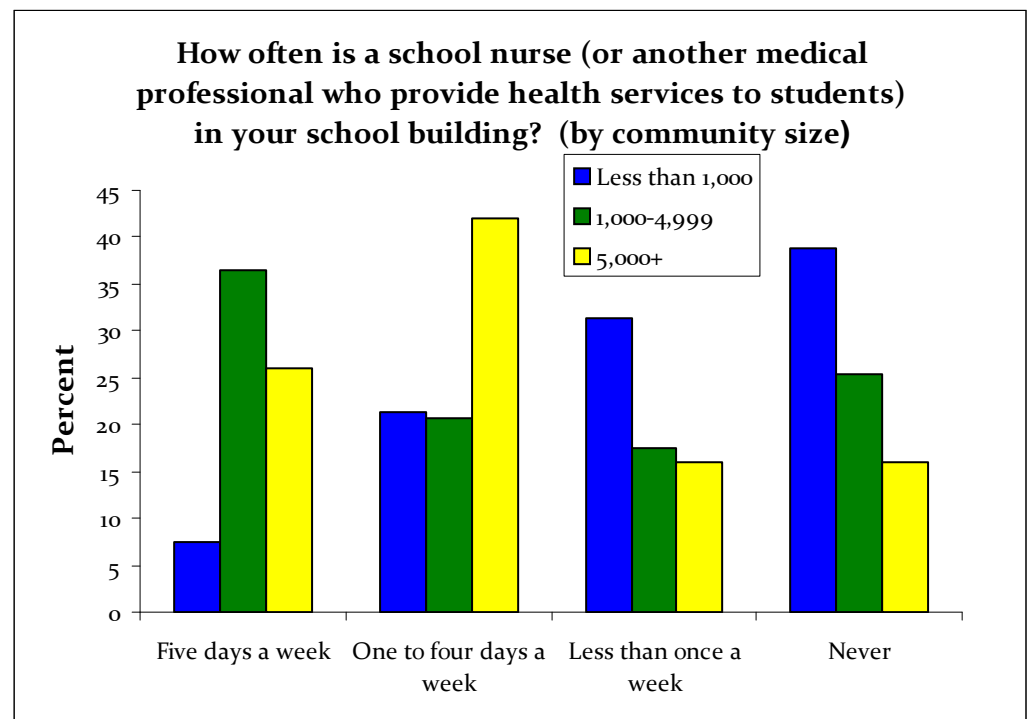
This report details the results of an 15 question electronic survey sent to 800 school administrators in May 2008 using the School Administrators of Montana e-mail listserv. A total of 194 administrators responded to the survey for a response rate of 24%.



Only 43% of administrators report that their school has a nurse who usually handles health issues. In schools serving communities of less than 1,000 people, only 24% reported having a nurse who usually handles health issues. Responsibility for handling health issues often falls on office staff (33% overall, 41% in schools serving communities of less than 1,000) but can also fall to principals (9%) and teachers (4%). In 10% of schools, no one is designated to handle health issues.

Comments: -“School nurse, teachers, principal and secretary all tend to the students health needs”
 -“We have a teacher who is an EMT” -“Secretary is the one to administer meds.”
 - Health Department Nurse provides medical advice/assistance.

In all, 22% of Montana administrators report having a school nurse in their building 5 days a week. That number falls to 7.5% in schools serving communities of less than 1,000 people. 28% of all administrators report that a school nurse is never in their building and 23% report that a school nurse is in the school building less than once a week. Even in schools serving communities of 5,000 or more, 32% have a nurse in the building less than one day a week or not at all.



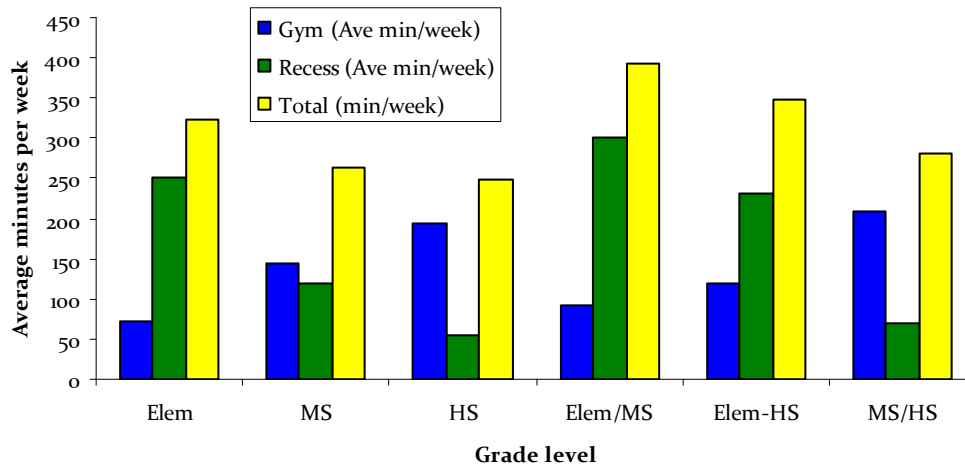
Comments: -“We have a nurse who comes in about once a month.”
 - “We are fortunate to have a full-time nurse.”
 - “If health issues are more serious we usually consult with the School Nurse, but she is not on-site.”



Montana School Administrators' Survey Results



Administrator reported average minutes per week of gym class and recess for Montana students, by grade level



According to Montana school administrators, elementary students have the highest number of minutes per week of recess (average=250-300) while high school students spend the most minutes per week in gym class (average=193-210). However, based on administrator comments, most high school students are not required to take gym class every year. Elementary students had the highest combined minutes per week of gym class and recess (322 for elementary administrators only and 392 for elementary & middle school administrators).

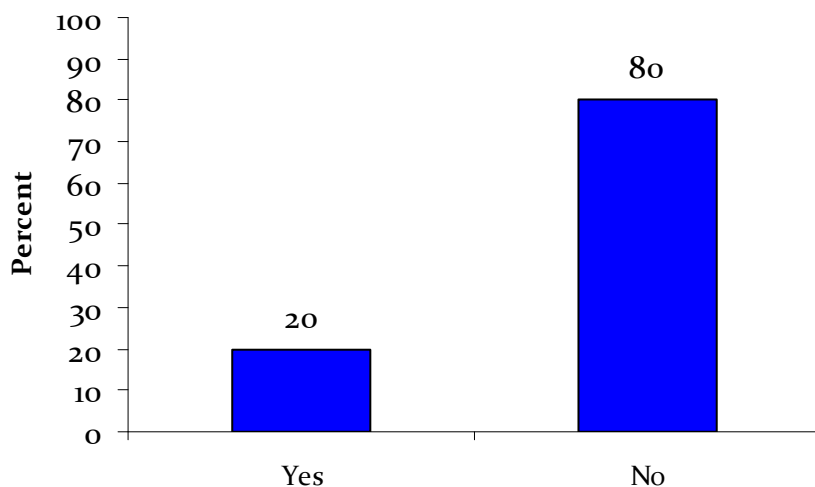
Comments: -“Lunch break 45 minutes. Not necessarily outside”

- “Amount of recess depends on age level.”

- “Gym class is fresh/soph only.” - “We have PE every other week.”

- “Varied, depending upon individuals. Some students spend alot of time in the gym.”

Do you regularly collect Body Mass Index (BMI) data for your students?



20% of administrators report that their schools collect Body Mass Index Data for their students. Based on these responses and the administrator's comments it is evident that most schools in Montana do not systematically collect BMI data for students.

Comments:

-“Twice per year in grade 9 & 10”

-“At the beginning and end of the PE semester”

-“Not regularly.....”

-“Not all grade levels”

-“Sometimes collect”

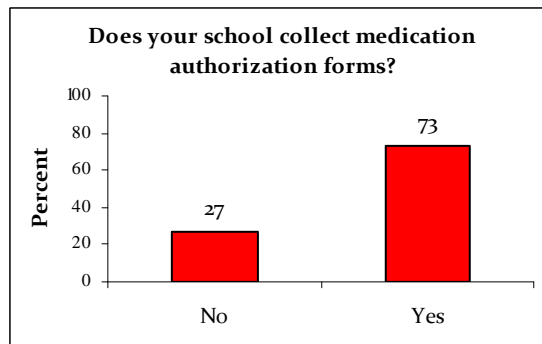
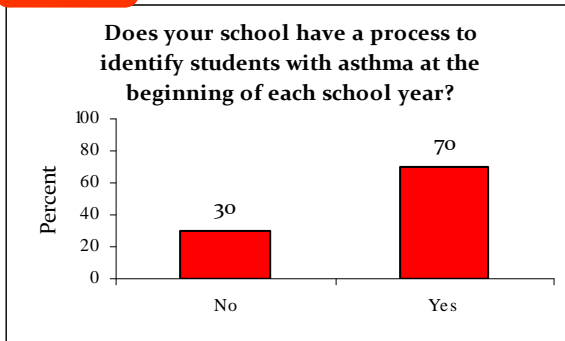
-“We have in the past, when nursing students have been available”

-“Plan to start”

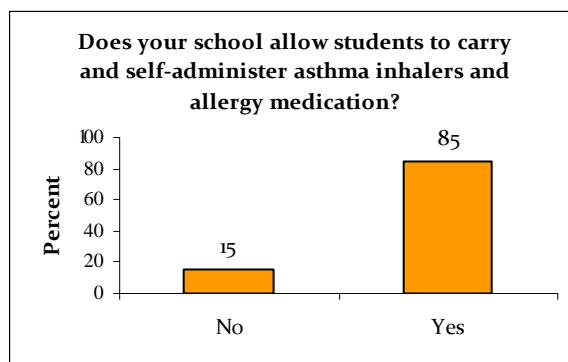
-“One time a year with school nurse”

Survey Results: Steps to Creating Asthma Friendly Schools

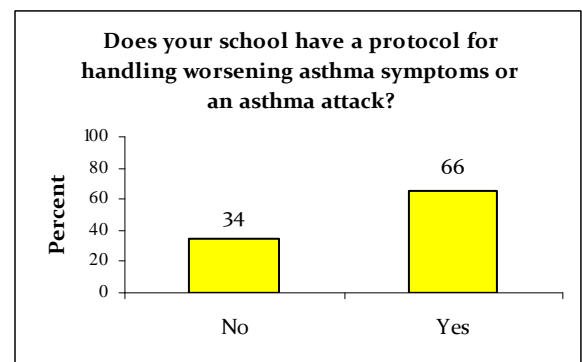
Step #1 Identify students with asthma



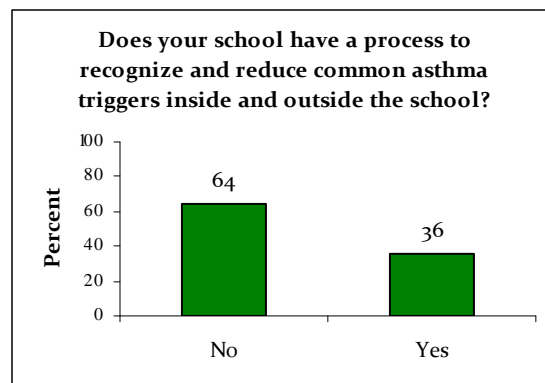
Step #2 Allow students easy access to their inhalers



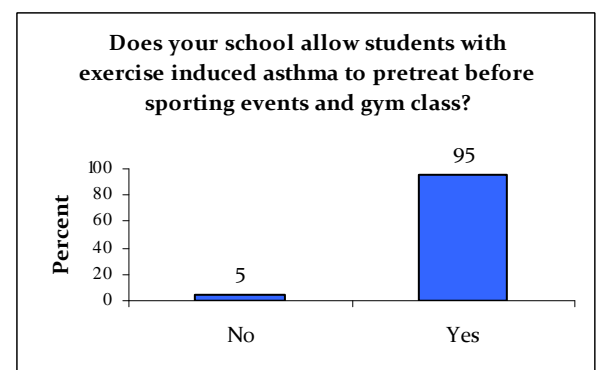
Step #3 Create a school wide protocol for handling worsening asthma



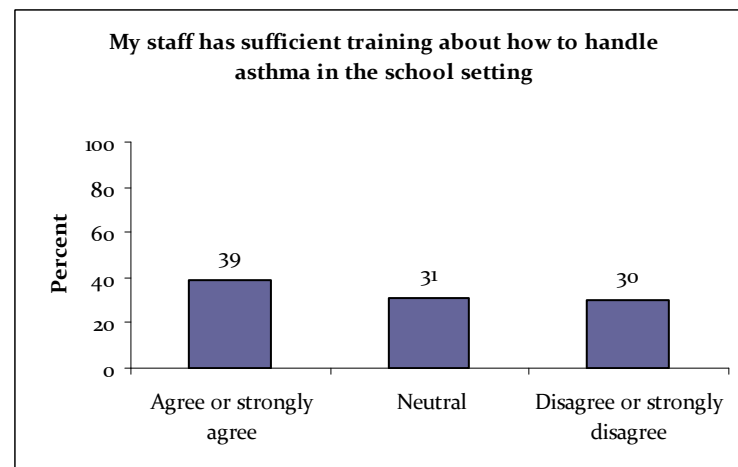
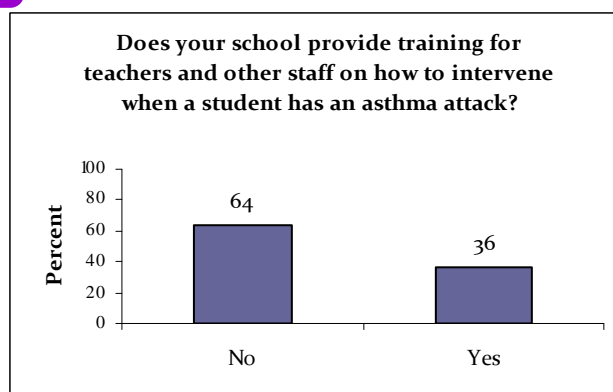
Step #4 Identify and reduce common asthma triggers



Step #5 Enable students with asthma to participate in school activities

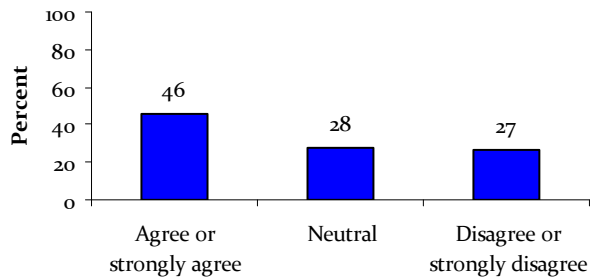


Step #6 Educate staff, students and parents



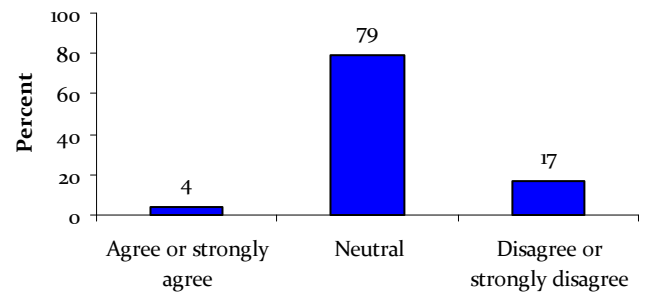
Survey Results: Perception of Asthma in School

Asthma is a serious health concern at my school



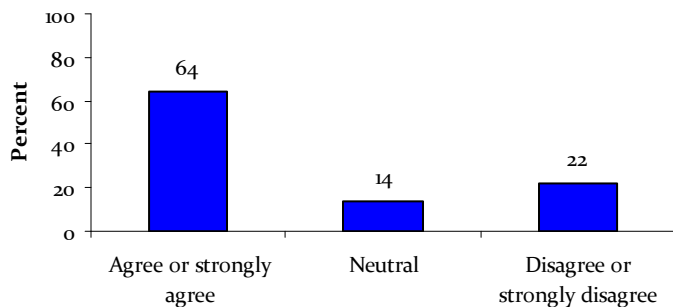
Only 46% of school administrators agree with the statement asthma is a serious health concern at their school while 27% disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.

Asthma is a leading cause of absenteeism at my school



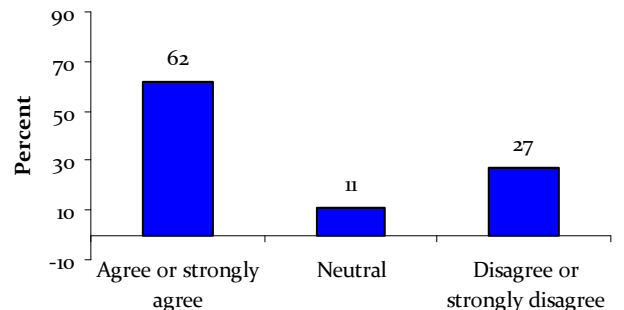
Only 4% of school administrators believe that asthma is a leading cause of absenteeism at their school. Most (79%) neither agree or disagree with the statement.

My school is adequately prepared to handle asthma



64% of administrators believe that their school is adequately prepared to handle asthma. However, only 39% agree that their staff has adequate training on how to handle asthma in the school setting (see previous page).

I am interested in receiving more information about creating an asthma friendly school



Most administrators (62%) indicate that they are interested in receiving more information about creating an asthma friendly school.

Conclusion

This survey highlights some significant gaps in Montana public school's ability to care for students with asthma. Some areas of concern include:

- **School nurse coverage.** 28% of administrators report that a nurse is never in their school building. Another 50% only report nursing coverage part time.
- **Issues with self-carrying medication.** 15% of administrators report that they do not allow students to self carry and administer medication, despite the fact that Montana law gives students the right to do so.
- **Identification and reduction of asthma triggers.** 64% of schools do not have a process in place to regularly identify and reduce asthma triggers. Such a process could help reduce the number of asthma attacks in schools.
- **Staff education.** 64% of schools do not provide training for staff on how to respond when a student has an attack and only 39% believe their staff has sufficient training on how to handle asthma.
- **Administrator perceptions.** Only 46% of administrators believe that asthma is a serious health concern at their school and only 4% believe it is a leading cause of absenteeism.

Despite these concerns, most administrators are open to learning more about responding to asthma. 64% indicate that they are interested in receiving more information about creating an asthma friendly school.